



STATE REPRESENTATIVE

FALL 2020

Kristine Howard

167TH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT

WEBSITE: RepKHoward.com

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Dear Neighbor,

The global pandemic has tested all of us—as individuals, as community members, as a commonwealth and as a nation.

Though Pennsylvania was one of the first and hardest hit states by the virus, we have been able to avoid the dramatic spikes other states have experienced after reopening by working collectively to follow the balanced, reasoned and comprehensive policies our commonwealth has adopted.

All of that said, the story of COVID-19 in Pennsylvania is far from finished. **We must continue following social distancing guidelines and wearing our masks.**

The novel coronavirus continues to impact every aspect of our lives.

The pandemic has hurt many of us economically. Some of us are struggling to feed our families, and many small businesses – the backbone of our community – are in dire straits.

Equally serious is the psychosocial impact on families and individuals. The emotional toll of the pandemic is not to be underestimated.

But my office has been working to support individuals and families struggling with economic and personal hardships, providing information, contacts and guidance. We have continually offered

support for those needing help with navigating the process of applying for Unemployment Compensation (UC) and Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA).

Our local businesses will continue to need support, and I am committed to working daily to see that they get the help needed to survive in this new economic climate. All levels of government are offering grant and loan programs to support our businesses as they get back on their feet, and we are happy to assist in applying for them.

As a former social worker, I am determined to ensure that the safety net for individuals and families stays in place throughout this global ordeal, however long it lasts.

This virus has strained our society and our economy like nothing before. There is much more to be done, but I know we will get through this because we have already accomplished so much together and demonstrated the fundamental strength of our society and commitment to ourselves and our neighbors.

Sincerely,

Rep. Kristine Howard

Legislative Update

My resolution, HR 952, would create a task force to study remote learning

This spring, schools were thrust into a system of remote learning to protect the health of students and teachers. Unfortunately, schools didn't have the time for the necessary planning to ensure effective teaching for a diverse range of students of varying means, abilities and circumstances.

It is critical that our schools follow best practices in remote learning situations, but unfortunately, there has been little research done to identify what those would be. My goal for this task force is to remedy this gap in our knowledge. It would do this by conducting a study over the next year, which would lead to the creation of a report identifying these best practices and detailing critical factors and barriers to successful implementation of remote learning.

The 167th District includes Malvern Borough and the townships of Charlestown, Easttown, East Whiteland, West Pikeland, West Whiteland and Willistown.

PANDEMIC RESOURCES

Since we're no longer living in "usual" times, the rest of this pamphlet will differ from the usual legislative newsletter. It is intended to provide an easy reference for some of the more commonly needed resources that are available to help everybody navigate this pandemic. If you need help with these or any other issues, please contact my office.

CHESTER COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Jeanne E. Casner, MPH, PMP

County Health Director

601 Westtown Rd, Ste 290

West Chester, PA, 19380-0990

Phone: 610-344-6225

Fax: 610-344-6727

<https://www.chesco.org/224/Health>

COVID-19 Questions? Call 610-344-6225

After hours, you can be connected to the Greater Philadelphia Coronavirus Helpline, which is staffed 24/7 1-800-722-7112.

Chester County is currently offering PCR (nasal swab) diagnostic tests. Testing is available for individuals who have COVID-19 symptoms or who have had a known exposure to someone with COVID-19. Testing will be offered at multiple sites throughout the week.

Go to <https://www.chesco.org/4376/Coronavirus-COVID-19>.

IT'S OK TO REACH OUT FOR HELP

This health crisis has created additional stress for many.
Please know that it's OK to ask for help.

STATE AND NATIONAL *resources*

- **PA crisis text help:** Text 'PA' to 741741 for help 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
- **PA crisis helpline:** Administered by the PA Department of Human Services 855-284-2494.
- **Disaster distress helpline:** Experiencing emotional distress due to the pandemic? Call 1-800-985-5990 or text 'TalkWithUs' to 66746 to connect with a trained crisis counselor.
- **Get help for substance use disorder:** Reach out for support from the PA Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs by calling 1-800-662-4357.
- **Mental Health Crisis Intervention Services:** 1-800-499-7455
- **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline:** 1-800-273-8255
- **Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA):** 800-662-HELP (4357) www.samhsa.gov

COUNTY MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES

Chester County's Warm Line
1-866-846-2722

Valley Creek Crisis Center
610-280-3270

Child Care and School

Childcare centers have reopened, while adhering to certain restrictions and CDC guidelines. Answers to frequently asked questions for parents and caregivers are at www.dhs.pa.gov.

If you are looking for child care, visit www.findchildcare.pa.gov.

For the latest updates on reopening PA schools, visit www.education.pa.gov.

RENT, MORTGAGE AND HOUSING ASSISTANCE

The **Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency** recently announced that help is available for renters and homeowners financially impacted by COVID-19.

Full details on eligibility and more are available at www.phfa.org.

Feeding families

The **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)** helps Pennsylvanians buy food.

Apply online at www.compass.state.pa.us.

Chester County Food Bank and Pantries

There are many resources in Chester County if you are food insecure.

Chester County Food Bank

Phone: 610-873-6000

Fax: 484-359-4346

Email: contact@chestercountyfoodbank.org

<https://chestercountyfoodbank.org/>

A list of **Chester County food pantries** can be found here: <https://bit.ly/3hDB3Xk>.

CHIP - Health insurance for kids and teens

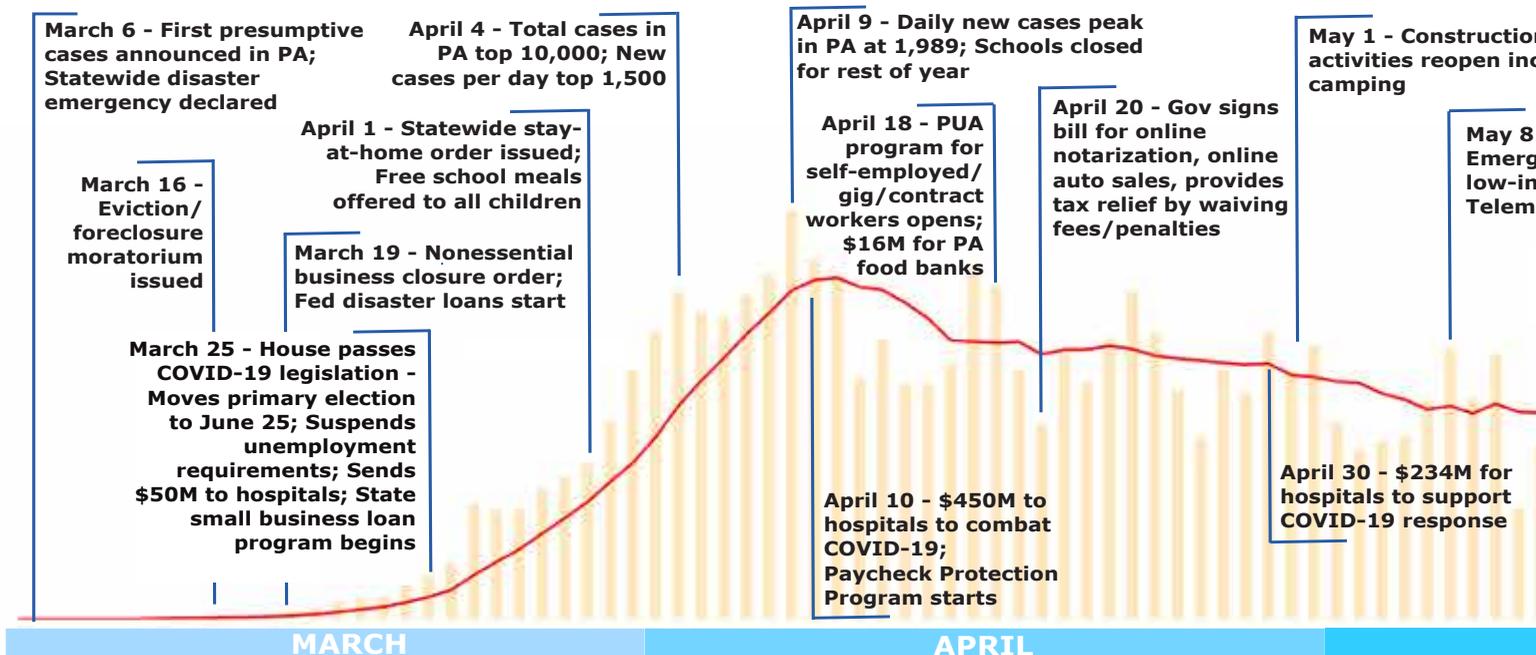
The **Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP)** is designed to provide health insurance to uninsured children and teens who are not eligible for or enrolled in Medical Assistance. You can apply online at www.chipcoverspakids.com.

Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program

From June through November, the **Pennsylvania Women, Infants and Children (WIC)** and **Senior Farmers Market Nutrition programs** provide low-income seniors and eligible WIC participants with vouchers to purchase Pennsylvania-grown fruits, vegetables, and fresh-cut herbs from approved farm markets and farm stands across PA. Vouchers are distributed to participants via mail from WIC clinics and Area Agencies on Aging.

Learn more at www.agriculture.pa.gov.

Pennsylvania's Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic:



UNEMPLOYMENT

It's not uncommon to experience delays in navigating public resources, as the commonwealth and the U.S. are experiencing overwhelming levels of demand. Since mid-March, more than 2 million Pennsylvanians have filed for unemployment benefits.

There are two unemployment programs available: traditional Unemployment Compensation (UC) and Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA). UC covers most people, while PUA is a new program for self-employed, 'gig' and contract workers, as well as many others that may not have qualified for traditional unemployment.

Information and applications for both programs are at www.uc.pa.gov.

COOLING AND HEATING YOUR HOME

The Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) Recovery Crisis Program runs through August 31 or until all budgeted funding is expended. More information about the LIHEAP Recovery Crisis Program, including income limits, can be found at www.dhs.pa.gov or by calling 1-877-395-8930.

HELP FOR BUSINESS OWNERS

COVID-19 RELIEF SMALL BUSINESS ASSISTANCE GRANT PROGRAM

A website has been set up to help small businesses with a new state-run grant program. Businesses must apply through a partnering Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI). Visit www.pabusinessgrants.com for resources, including an application checklist, eligibility details and a full list of participating CDFIs.

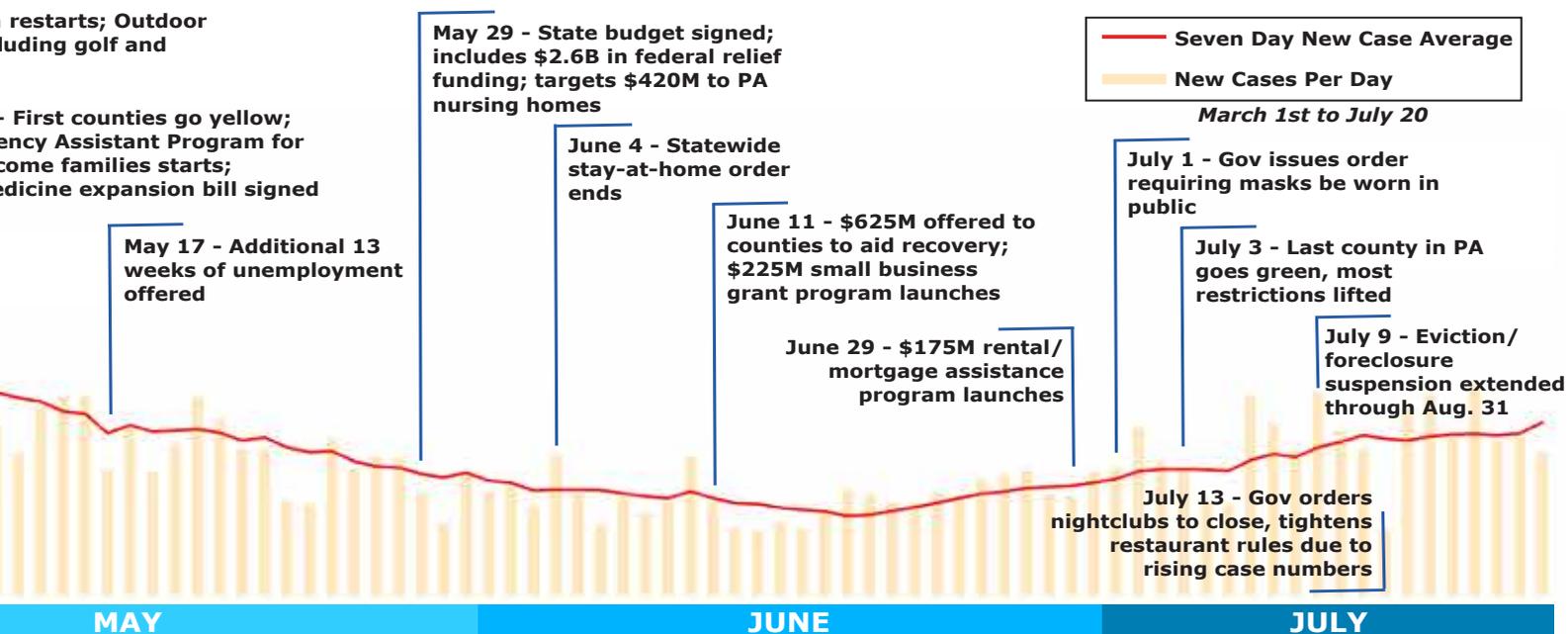
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Find resources including detailed pandemic guidance for businesses, information on state and federal programs, and more at www.dced.pa.gov.

U.S. SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

Find information on federal funding and resources, including the Paycheck Protection Program, a loan designed to provide a direct incentive for small businesses to keep their workers on the payroll at www.sba.gov.

Decisive Action Saved Lives and Flattened the Curve



PA ED. DEPT. OUTLINES SCHOOL GUIDELINES, REQUIREMENTS FOR PANDEMIC



Pennsylvania Department of Health Secretary Dr. Rachel Levine and Education Secretary Pedro Rivera outlined updated guidance to help Pre-K to 12 schools prepare to reopen and safely educate students. Each school entity will determine if classes resume in person at school buildings, remotely or a combination of both options.

In instances when someone from a school tests positive, state public health staff will immediately assist the school with risk assessment, isolation recommendations, and other infection control assistance.

www.education.pa.gov provides a full list of best practices for schools to consider before the start of in-person classes.

Municipal Contact Information:

Charlestown Township

Phone: 610-240-0326

Fax: 610-240-0328

Email: manager@charlestown.pa.us

<http://www.charlestown.pa.us/>

Easttown Township

Phone: 610-687-3000

Fax: 610-687-9666

Email: easttown@easttown.org

<https://www.easttown.org/>

East Whiteland Township

Phone: 610-648-0600

Fax: 610-648-0388

<http://www.eastwhiteland.org/>

West Pikeland Township

Phone: 610-590-5300

Fax: 610-228-3477

Email: office@westpikeland.com

<http://www.westpikeland.com/>

West Whiteland Township

Phone: 610-363-9525

<https://westwhiteland.org/>

Willistown Township

Phone: 610-647-5300

<https://www.willistown.pa.us/>

Borough of Malvern

Phone: 610-644-2602

Fax: 610-644-4504

Email: malvern@malvern.org

<http://www.malvern.org/>

School Districts:

Downingtown

Phone: 610-269-8460

Fax: 855-329-3273

<https://www.dasd.org/>

West Chester

Phone: 484-266-1000

<https://www.wcasd.net/>

Great Valley

Phone: 610-889-2125

<https://www.gvsd.org/>

Tredyfin-Easttown

Phone: 610-240-1900

<https://www.tesd.net/>

SEPTA Senior Pass

My office is again offering SEPTA Senior Passes to those who qualify. Call my office at 610-251-1070 or email RepHoward@pahouse.net to schedule an appointment.

When you come for your appointment, please remember to:

- Bring proper identification.
- Wear a mask.

IMPORTANT NOTE: When on SEPTA buses and trains, please follow [some simple customer safety guidelines](#) – including wearing a face covering at all times – for your safety and those of SEPTA's frontline workers.

2020 GENERAL ELECTION IMPORTANT DATES

OCT 19 Last day to register to vote for the general election.
register.votesPA.com

OCT 27 Last day to apply for a mail-in or absentee ballot.
votesPA.com/ApplyMailBallot

NOV 3 Voted mail-in and absentee ballots must be received by the county by 8pm.
votesPA.com/County

NOV 3 General election day. Polls are open from 7am to 8pm.
votesPA.com/Polls

VotesPA.com

VOTE BY MAIL

Go to www.votespa.com to apply for your mail-in ballot.





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P.O. Box 202167
Harrisburg, PA 17120-2167



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District Office Open by Appointment

My office is open by appointment only. To schedule your appointment, call my office at 610-251-1070 or email RepHoward@pahouse.net. Please come to your appointment wearing a mask.

Visit RepKHoward.com and sign up for my email newsletter to stay up to date!